

Chapter 5

THE ISSUE OF THREE DAYS IN THE TOMB

Copyright © 2005 Gerald Brown



One of the major reasons the Friday crucifixion, Sunday morning resurrection is so widely believed is because of the many places where scripture is thought to state that Jesus was resurrected *on* the third day. The reasoning is that if Jesus was resurrected *on* the third day, then He could not have been in the tomb for three days and three nights. If He was resurrected *on* the third day so that it was not physically possible for Him to have been in the tomb for three full days, then the “three days and three nights” of Matthew 12:40 must be an idiomatic expression that is intended to mean the consecutive parts of three days. A great deal of emphasis is placed on the English prepositions as evidence in support of the traditional Christian teaching that the “three days and three nights” should be understood to be the one and one-half days that began on Friday evening and ended on Sunday morning. However, when the Greek prepositions in the resurrection story are examined, the traditional teaching is not supported.

Naturally, it is to be expected that four different writers telling the same story would use different words to describe the same events and we find an appropriate variety of Greek words and phrases in those passages dealing with the three day time issue. While most of the passages are thought to have been translated in the KJV as “in three days” or something close to that, and many versions translate these phrases as “on the third day,” at least two passages have been translated to read “after three days,” which raises questions regarding the significance of this phrase. Is it *after* or *on* the third day or *in* three days that Jesus was resurrected? Certainly, it does matter. Not only is the three day issue related to the length of time He was in the tomb, but it is the critical piece of evidence used against Him at His trial as described in Matthew 16:61 and Mark 14:58. This calls for a close examination of the prepositions and other words used with the third day references. This chapter is an

examination of the language surrounding the concept of the three days Jesus was in the tomb as our understanding of these events hinges on the proper understanding of the function of these words and phrases in the Greek language.

Jesus gave the explicit “three days and three nights *sign of the prophet Jonah*” statement in Matthew 12:40. There are 21 other passages that express a three day context in relation to His crucifixion and resurrection. These passages will be examined according to the Greek words used. The first word examined is the preposition is μετὰ (meta), which appears in four different verses in this story in the Greek. Three of those verses represent three separate events in the book of Mark and there are five parallel passages in Matthew and Luke that mention the third day but which have no preposition stated in the text. Even though none of the five parallel passages has a preposition, they are the companion verses of other writers and must be compatible with those verses where μετὰ (meta) is found regarding the length of time Jesus was in the tomb. The second word examined is the preposition is ἐν (en), which appears in four different verses in the record. The third word examined is the preposition is δια (dia), which appears twice in the record. The fourth word examined is ἕως (eôs), which appears in only one passage. The fifth words examined is the phrase τρίτην ταύτην ἡμέραν ἄγει ἀφ’ οὗ (tritên tautên êmeran agei aph ou), which appears only in Luke 24:21. The final two verses have no special words in the Greek to specify the length of time Jesus was in the grave and no direct companion passage in another part of scripture to provide the context of the relationship between the crucifixion of Jesus and His resurrection.

Other texts where key words are used in the Greek are presented to illustrate that certain Greek words have been translated by the KJV committee in other

places in scripture to have a meaning that should also be used in the story of the crucifixion and resurrection. This analysis shows that the various words and phrases used in the Greek have a consistent meaning regarding the length of time Jesus was in the tomb which is supported by all the writers of the New

Testament scriptures. For comparison purposes, the verses are presented in their entirety first in the Nestle-Aland Greek, then the transliterated Greek, and then in the KJV. The words that indicate *the third day* are in bold.

μετὰ = meta

The preposition μετὰ (meta) appears in the New Testament 473 times and occurs in both the genitive and accusative cases. In the genitive case it denotes association or a commingling of factors — a time during which events occur together. In the accusative case it denotes a sequence or the order in which one event follows another. The word is most commonly translated as *with* (345 times), but is also translated as *after* (88 times), *among* (5 times), *hereafter* (4 times), *afterward* (4 times), *against* (4 times), *in* (2 times), *follow* (2 times), and miscellaneous words 18 times. It is left untranslated in one verse. In the genitive case it is translated primarily as *with*, *among*, or *against*. In the accusative case it is translated primarily as *after*. In every case where μετὰ (meta) is found in the context of the resurrection of Jesus, it is in the accusative case and is translated as *after* in the KJV.

There are four verses where this preposition shows up in the Greek in the story of the resurrection. In two cases, Mark 8:31 and Matthew 27:63, it is translated according to the standard rules of both the Greek and English languages. In one instance, Mark 9:31, it appears to have been incorrectly translated to modify the phrase that precedes it rather than the phrase that follows it. As in English, so it is in Greek that prepositions in the accusative case modify the phrase that follows it, but that was not done in this verse. In another instance, Mark 10:34, the word μετὰ (meta) is left untranslated so that the preposition does not even appear in the English text in the KJV.

The passages where this preposition appears in three of the texts have six companion passages in the other synoptic gospels. In each case the phrase in the companion passage has no preposition to specify its time. This presents a bit of a problem for the translators. The rules of grammar for Greek do not necessarily require that prepositional phrases begin

with a preposition, while a prepositional phrase in English must begin with a preposition. Upon finding a prepositional phrase in Greek that is without a preposition, the translator is forced to select an English preposition and insert it into the text, the context of the story being the guide as to the selection of the preposition that best represents the meaning of the text. In the case of multiple versions of a story such as we have with the story of Passion Week recorded in the Gospels, another step should be employed. To determine which English preposition is the best one to insert into the text in the English translation, the Greek text that has a prepositional phrase without the preposition must be compared with the companion passages in the Greek that have the preposition with the phrase. The translator can then select an English preposition that matches the Greek. The Greek text with the preposition stated certainly represents a more accurate version of the story than the text where the preposition is missing. The text with the preposition stated in the Greek represents the understanding of the author of the Gospel, while the English translation of the text where the preposition has been inserted by the translator primarily represents the bias of the translator.

The companion passages are presented along with the passage that has this specific preposition. The first passages presented are the instances where Jesus told His disciples He had to go to Jerusalem to die at the hands of violent men and that He would rise again. The fourth use of this preposition is found in the story of the religious leaders talking to Pilate on the day after His burial where they requested that soldiers be stationed at the tomb to prevent the disciples from stealing the body and making the claim that He had risen just as He had predicted.

After Peter's Confession

The first of the three occasions when Jesus told His disciples about His impending death and resurrection was just after Peter had acknowledged

that Jesus is the Son of the Living God. Only Mark uses the preposition in the story of the resurrection; the companion verses in Matthew and Luke dealing

with the same event do not include a preposition in the phrase relative to the third day. Looking at this from the perspective of a detective, if these three gospels tell of the same event, then the record with the

greater detail gives us more confidence that the companion verses intended to convey the same meaning. The story is recorded in the synoptic gospels in Matthew 16:21, Mark 8:31, and Luke 9:22.

Matthew 16:21

Ἀπὸ τότε ἤρξατο Ἰησοῦς Χριστός δεικνύειν τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ ὅτι δεῖ αὐτόν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἀπελθεῖν καὶ πολλὰ παθεῖν ἀπὸ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ ἀρχιερέων καὶ γραμματέων καὶ ἀποκτανθῆναι καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἐγερθῆναι.

apo tote êrxato o iêsous deiknuein tois mathêtais autou oti dei auton tsb=apelthein eis ierosoluma a=apelthein kai polla pathein apo tôn presbuterôn kai archiereôn kai grammateôn kai apoktanthênai kai **tê tritê êmera** egerthênai

From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again **the third day**.

Mark 8:31

Καὶ ἤρξατο διδάσκειν αὐτοὺς ὅτι δεῖ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου πολλὰ παθεῖν, καὶ ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι ὑπὸ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι ὑπὸ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ τῶν ἀρχιερέων καὶ τῶν γραμματέων καὶ ἀποκτανθῆναι καὶ μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας ἀναστῆναι.

kai êrxato didaskein autous oti dei ton uion tou anthrôpou polla pathein kai apodokimasthênai a=upo tsb=apo tôn presbuterôn kai ab=tôn archiereôn kai ab=tôn grammateôn kai apoktanthênai kai **meta treis êmeras** anastênai

And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and [of] the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and **after three days** rise again.

Luke 9:22

εἰπὼν ὅτι δεῖ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου πολλὰ παθεῖν καὶ ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι ἀπὸ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ ἀρχιερέων καὶ γραμματέων καὶ ἀποκτανθῆναι καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἐγερθῆναι.

eipôn oti dei ton uion tou anthrôpou polla pathein kai apodokimasthênai apo tôn presbuterôn kai archiereôn kai grammateôn kai apoktanthênai kai **tê tritê êmera** b=anastênai ats=egerthênai

Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised **the third day**.

Of these three passages, Matthew and Luke do not supply a preposition leaving the time as an unspecified reference to the third day. However, Mark provides the preposition μετὰ (meta) which means *after* in this context. Since Mark's version in this setting is specific that Jesus stated that He would rise *after* three days, this same meaning logically extends to the third day reference in the companion verses in Matthew and Luke for this occasion.

Translations that insert the word *on* in the English version of Matthew and Luke here do so because of the bias of the translator and not the words in the text. They also fail to coordinate these passages with the record in Mark which includes the specific preposition μετὰ (meta). When Matthew and Luke are compared with the more specific language of Mark, all three should be taken to mean that the resurrection would take place after the third day.

After the Transfiguration

The second time Jesus told His disciples about his resurrection was a short time after His transfiguration on the mountain. While coming down the mountain He told Peter, James, and John not to tell anyone of the vision they had just witnessed until He had risen from the dead. This is the second recorded time Jesus mentions rising from the dead, but it does not have the full prediction of His death and resurrection. A short time later, they were gathering in Galilee and Jesus

told them directly that the Son of Man would be delivered to men who would kill Him and He would be raised again. While they did not understand what Jesus was really saying, they were afraid to ask for clarification. It is recorded in Matthew 17:23, Mark 9:31, and Luke 9:44. Again, only Mark uses the preposition, but the companion verses are presented here to show that the record in Matthew and Luke are dealing with the same story. They are presented in

The Issue of Three Days in the Tomb - 4

their entirety first in the Greek, then the transliterated Greek, and then in the KJV. The key words that indicate the third day issue are in bold.

Matthew 17:23

καὶ ἀποκτενοῦσιν αὐτόν, καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἐγερθήσεται καὶ ἐλυπήθησαν σφόδρα.	kai apoktenousin auton kai tê tritê êmera egerthêsetai kai elupêthêsan sphodra	And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry.
---	---	--

Mark 9:31

ἐδίδασκεν γὰρ τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς ὅτι ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδίδοται εἰς χεῖρας ἀνθρώπων, καὶ ἀποκτενοῦσιν αὐτόν, καὶ ἀποκτανθεὶς μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας ἀναστήσεται.	edidasken gar tous mathêtas autou kai elegen autois oti o uios tou anthrôpou paradidotai eis cheiras anthrôpôn kai apoktenousin auton kai apoktantheis a= meta tsb= tê a= treis tsb=tritê a= êmeras tsb=êmera anastêsetai	For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day .
---	---	---

Luke 9:44

θέσθε ὑμεῖς εἰς τὰ ὦτα ὑμῶν τοὺς λόγους τούτους· ὁ γὰρ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου μέλλει παραδίδοσθαι εἰς χεῖρας ἀνθρώπων.	tsb=opou tsb=o tsb=skôlêx tsb=autôn tsb=ou tsb=teleuta tsb=kai tsb=to tsb=pur tsb=ou tsb=sbennutai	Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.
---	--	--

Of these three passages, only Mark supplies a preposition in his text. However, the translators of the KJV have made the preposition μετὰ (meta) modify the phrase that precedes the preposition rather than the phrase that follows it. The natural reading of the Greek would have the preposition modify the phrase that follows it, i.e., *the third day*. By making μετὰ (meta) modify the fact of being dead ἀποκτανθεὶς (apoktantheis), *the third day* is left unmodified. This is inconsistent with (1) the structure of the sentence in that μετὰ (meta) directly precedes *the third day* and naturally modifies the time after which the resurrection will take place and (2) the translation of Mark 8:31, as well as with other passages in the New Testament that use μετὰ (meta) to modify a three day event.

It appears that the translators may have viewed these phrases in such a way as to conclude that the word μετὰ (meta) should be translated in the genitive case. In the genitive case μετὰ (meta) is used after verbs and phrases which indicate mutual inclinations and pursuits, the entering into agreement or relations with another person or entity. But there is no hint of mutual agreement in this text with regard to Jesus being killed. Jesus did not conspire with anyone for His death, nor does the text indicate that two or more events would occur simultaneously. The resurrection is an event that clearly happens after He has been dead for three days. There is no evidence in the text

to support the notion that μετὰ (meta) should be understood in the genitive case in this verse, and to translate it as such results in a mistranslation. In this verse it is certain that μετὰ (meta) should be understood in the accusative case and should be translated to mean *after the third day*.

Following are five passages not associated with Passion Week that show how the preposition μετὰ (meta) is consistently translated to modify the phrase that follows the preposition. All these texts have a three day context except for the verse in Galatians which mentions three years. One should see that this text in Mark should properly be translated "...and having been killed, he shall rise again after the third day."

Just as he had in his report of the first time Jesus told of His death and resurrection, Matthew does not supply a preposition leaving the time as an unspecified reference to the third day. Luke makes no mention of the third day at all in his version of the story. Since Mark's version in this setting includes the specific preposition μετὰ (meta), which should be translated *after the third day*, this same meaning should extend to the third day reference in Matthew. Because Luke makes no reference to the three day time period in this passage, the three day issue does not apply to this text in Luke. Translations that insert the word *on* in the English version of Matthew here do so because of the bias of the translator and not the

words in the text. They also fail to coordinate these passages with the record in Mark which includes the specific preposition μετὰ (meta). When Matthew is compared with the more specific language of Mark, both of these should be taken to mean that the resurrection took place *after the third day*.

Luke 2:46

καὶ ἐγένετο μετὰ ἡμέρας τρεῖς εὗρον αὐτὸν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ καθεζόμενον ἐν μέσῳ τῶν διδασκάλων καὶ ἀκούοντα αὐτῶν καὶ ἐπερωτῶντα αὐτούς· kai egeneto a=**meta** tsb=meth **êmeras treis** euron auton en tō ierō kathezomenon en mesō tōn didaskalōn kai akouonta autōn kai eperōtōnta autous And it came to pass, that **after three days** they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

Acts 25:1

Φῆστος οὖν ἐπιβὰς τῇ ἐπαρχείῳ μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας ἀνέβη εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἀπὸ Καισαρείας, phēstos oun epibas tē a=eparcheia tsb=eparchia **meta treis êmeras** anebē eis ierosoluma apo kaisareias Now when Festus was come into the province, **after three days** he ascended from Caesarea to Jerusalem.

Acts 28:17

Ἐγένετο δὲ μετὰ ἡμεῶς τρεῖς συγκαλέσασθαι αὐτὸν τοὺς ὄντας τῶν Ἰουδαίων πρώτους· συνελθόντων δὲ αὐτῶν ἔλεγεν πρὸς αὐτούς· ἐγὼ, ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί, οὐδὲν ἐναντίον ποιήσας τῷ λαῷ ἢ τοῖς ἔθεσι τοῖς πατρώοις, δέσμιος ἐξ Ἱεροσολύμων παρεδόθην εἰς τὰς χεῖρας τῶν Ῥωμαίων, egeneto de **meta êmeras treis** sugkalesasthai a=auton tsb=ton tsb=paulon tous ontas tōn ioudaiōn prōtous sunelthontōn de autōn elegen pros autous a=egō andres adelphoi tsb=egō ouden enantion poiēsas tō laō ê tois a=ethesi tsb=ethesin tois patrōois desmios e And it came to pass, that **after three days** Paul called the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men [and] brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans.

Revelation 11:11

Καὶ μετὶ [τὰς] τρεῖς ἡμέρας καὶ ἥμισυ πνεῦμα ζωῆς ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ εἰσῆλθεν ἐν αὐτοῖς, καὶ ἕστησαν ἐπὶ τοὺς πόδας αὐτῶν, καὶ φόβος μέγας ἐπέπεσεν ἐπὶ τοὺς θεωροῦντας αὐτούς. kai **meta tas treis êmeras** kai êmisu pneuma zōês ek tou theou eisêlthen a=en b=eis ts=ep a=autois tsb=autous kai estêsan epi tous podas autōn kai phobos megas a=epesepes tsb=epesen epi tous theōroutas autous And **after three days** and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

Galatians 1:18

Ἔπειτα μετὰ τρία ἔτη ἀνῆλθον εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἱστορῆσαι Κηφᾶν, καὶ ἐπέμεινα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἡμέρας δεκαπέντε· epeita **meta etê tria** anêlthon eis ierosoluma istorêsai a=kêphan tsb=petron kai epemeina pros auton êmeras dekapente Then **after three years** I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.

During the Final Trip to Jerusalem

The third time Jesus tells His disciples of His impending death and resurrection is on the final trip up to Jerusalem. This third warning occurs shortly after the incident with the rich young ruler, which had the disciples saying that they had left everything to follow Jesus. Matthew 19:16-30, Mark 10:17-31, Luke 18:18-30. Jesus assured them that those who leave houses and family for the sake of heaven will receive many times – even one hundred times – more the value in heaven. Jesus then takes them aside to tell them that the hardship He is about to face will include betrayal and abuse that will result in His own death at the hands of wicked men, and that He will be resurrected after the third day. This conversation is the most lengthy statement Jesus gives regarding the events associated with His death and resurrection. It covers two verses in Matthew and Mark, and three verses in Luke. Only the last verse of the conversation regarding the third day statement in this passage from each Gospel is presented here. The

story is recorded in Matthew 20:18-19, Mark 10:33- 34, and Luke 18:31-33.

Matthew 20:19

καὶ παραδώσουσιν αὐτὸν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν εἰς τὸ ἐμπαῖξαι καὶ μαστιγῶσαι καὶ σταυρῶσαι, καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἐγερθήσεται.	kai paradôsousin auton tois ethnesin eis to empaixai kai mastigôsai kai staurôsai kai tê tritê êmera a=egerthêsetai tsb=anastêsetai	And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify [him]: and the third day he shall rise again.
---	--	--

Mark 10:34

καὶ ἐμπαίξουσιν αὐτῷ καὶ ἐμπτύσουσιν αὐτῷ καὶ μαστιγώσουσιν αὐτὸν καὶ ἀποκτενοῦσιν, καὶ μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας ἀναστήσεται.	kai empaixousin autô kai tsb=mastigôsousin tsb=auton tsb=kai emptusousin autô kai a=mastigôsousin tsb=apoktenousin auton kai a=apoktenousin a=kai a= meta a= treis a= êmeras tsb=tê tsb=tritê tsb=êmera anastêsetai	And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again.
--	--	--

Luke 18:33

καὶ μαστιγώσαντες ἀποκτενοῦσιν αὐτόν, καὶ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ ἀναστήσεται.	kai mastigôsantes apoktenousin auton kai tê êmera tê tritê anastêsetai	And they shall scourge [him], and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again.
--	---	---

The English translations in the KJV for all three verses appear to be the same. However, a quick look at the Greek for Mark's report shows that the preposition μετὰ (meta) is in the Greek text and has been left untranslated in Mark's Gospel. It should be noticed that μετὰ (meta) is in exactly the correct place to modify *the third day* just as it was in Mark 8:31. In this instance the KJV is an incorrect translation of Mark's Greek text. Clearly, Mark's version of the story should state "...and after the third day he shall rise again."

True to form, Matthew and Luke do not supply a preposition leaving the time as an unspecified reference to the third day. However, since the Greek

of Mark's version is specific that Jesus stated that he would rise *after* the third day, this same meaning logically extends to the third day reference in Matthew and Luke for this occasion. As stated previously, translations that insert the word *on* in the English version of Matthew and Luke here do so because of the bias of the translator and not the words in the text. They also fail to coordinate these passages with the Greek record in Mark which includes the specific preposition μετὰ (meta). When Matthew and Luke are compared with the more specific language of Mark, all three should be translated that the resurrection would take place *after the third day*.

The Day After the Crucifixion

In addition to the three times Jesus told His disciples that He would be resurrected after the third day, the religious leaders went to Pilate the day after the crucifixion and recited that exact same phrase to Pilate as part of their request for soldiers to be stationed around the burial site. Their request shows that the enemies of Jesus, the ones who had requested His death, understood Him to have said that He would be raised from the dead *after* three days. There was no doubt in their minds that He was capable of performing this miracle. They had already seen Him perform the resurrection of Jairus' daughter (Mark 5:21-42), the resurrection of son of the widow of Nain (Luke 7:11-14), and the resurrection for His friend

Lazarus (John 11:38-43). The evidence that Jesus had performed the most wonderful miracles and provided all the signs anyone seriously seeking the Messiah could wish for was abundant and the rulers could sense that the people were in the process of rejecting them and their authority, while they were embracing the teachings of Jesus. They were determined to put a stop to this movement and conspired to have Jesus condemned to death to save the nation. They even conspired to kill Lazarus along with Jesus (John 12:9-10) so as to wipe out the evidence of His connection with heaven. But when they approached Pilate, they pretend to believe that the disciples might steal Him away by stealth. This story is only told by Matthew,

so now it is Matthew who records the phrase *after the third day*, exactly the way it is written in Mark 8:31.

Matthew 27:63

λέγοντες. κύριε, ἐμνήσθημεν ὅτι ἐκεῖνος ὁ πλάνος εἶπεν ἔτι ζῶν μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας ἐγείρομαι.	legontes kurie emnêsthêmen oti ekeinos o planos eipen eti zôn meta treis êmeras egeiromai	Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.
---	--	--

Of the four verses where μετὰ (meta) is found in the Greek, this is the second verse where it is translated to be *after* three days. Moreover, Matthew is the second writer to use the preposition that specifies that Jesus was resurrected after He had been in the grave for three days. This matches his report of the conversation with the scribes and Pharisees where

Jesus gave them the sign of Jonah and spelled out that the sign is the three days and three nights that Jonah was in the belly of the whale. Two witnesses are required to confirm the truthfulness of a report, and Matthew is now the second witness that Jesus was raised *after* three days.

Just After the Resurrection

There is one more companion passage to the first time Jesus warned the disciples of His death and resurrection. When the women arrived at the tomb and found it empty, two men in dazzling clothing stood by them and reminded them that Jesus had told them while He was still in Galilee that He would be given over to violent men, crucified, and rise again. This is a reference to the experience recorded in Matthew 16:21, Mark 8:31, and Luke 9:22. Matthew 15:39 places the events of chapter 16 in the region of Magadan, which is along the western side of the Sea of Galilee. Mark 8:27 mentions the villages around

Caesarea Philippi, which were on the western side of the Sea of Galilee. Luke 9:10 mentions the town of Bethsaida, which is on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Regardless of which name is referenced, this first warning of His death and resurrection takes place in Galilee.

These men of Luke 24:4-7 appear to be the same as the young man in Mark 16:5, but are reported as angels in Matthew 28:2-7 and John 20:11-13. These messengers of God remind the women at this distressing time that Jesus had already told them in advance that all this would happen to Him.

Luke 24:6-7

⁶ [οὐκ ἔστιν ὧδε, ἀλλὰ ἠγέρθη.] μνησθητε ὡς ἐλάλησεν ὑμῖν ἔτι ὦν ἐν τῇ Γαλιλαίᾳ, ⁷ λέγων τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὅτι δεῖ παραδοθῆναι εἰς χεῖρας ἀνθρώπων ἀμαρτωλῶν καὶ σταυρωθῆναι καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἀναστῆναι.	⁶ ouk estin ôde a=alla tsb=all êgerthê mnêsthête ôs elalêsen umin eti ôn en tê galilaia ⁷ legôn tsb=oti tsb=dei ton uion tou anthrôpou a=oti a=dei parathênai eis cheiras anthrôpôn amartôlôn kai staurôthênai kai tê tritê êmera anastênai	⁶ He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, ⁷ Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.
--	--	--

The Greek text does not provide a preposition in this passage to specify the relationship between the resurrection and the third day, but it is certainly in the context of the first time Jesus revealed these events to His disciples. Mark's record of that conversation specifies that the resurrection was to be after three days. Since there is no preposition in this verse, there is no justification in claiming that the resurrection was *in* three days, *on* the third day, or *before* the end of the third day. Inserting the word *in* or *on* into this text or otherwise writing this so that the resurrection occurs before the end of the third day demonstrates a bias on

the part of the translator that is not supported by any evidence in the text and is an error.

The four passages with μετὰ (meta) in the Greek text, along with the six companion passages that parallel the same events, along with the other texts that show the pattern of how μετὰ (meta) is used in other verses in holy writ, demonstrate so far that ten (10) of the 21 passages that make reference to the resurrection relative to the third day place the resurrection clearly *after* the third day. According to these verses, the resurrection was not *in*, or *on*, or *before* the end of the third day, but after three days

were complete.

In addition, there are two witnesses, Matthew and

Mark, who specify in their writings that the time of the resurrection was three days *after* the crucifixion.

ἐν = en

The preposition ἐν (en) is extremely versatile as it has been translated into at least 25 different words or phrases in English. It appears in the New Testament more than 2,490 times. The word is most commonly translated as *in* (1,874 times), but is also

translated as *by* (141 times), *with* (143 times), *among* (117 times), *at* (112 times), *on* (46 times), *through* (37 times), and miscellaneous words 321 times. Following is a list of some of those miscellaneous words and their frequency of use:

about = 1	because of = 4	by means = 1	of = 6	unto = 7	to = 7
after = 1	before = 1	by way of = 1	over = 1	upon = 5	toward = 3
against = 1	between = 1	for = 4	under = 2	throughout = 5	when = 2

This Greek preposition does not have nearly the degree of precision that English speakers expect of their prepositions, which is fairly typical of this part of speech in Greek. Prepositions in Greek tend to serve more of a connective function getting the listener to the object of the preposition rather than serving to define the nature of the action of the preposition, which is often the purpose of a preposition in English. This often leads to the use of a wide variety of English words as translators struggle to convey the meaning of a particular Greek prepositional phrase. In some cases, it can convey an opposite meaning in one passage when compared to another passage. Examples from the above list show that ἐν (en) has been translated to mean both *with* and

against, *before* and *after*, *over* and *under*. Each of these paired English prepositions shows an opposite function. This is a reflection of the principle expressed earlier that many Greek words can have opposite meanings, and the specific meaning for a text is determined by the context.

The word ἐν (en) has been translated at least three times in the KJV to be either *after* or *when*. The three verses are presented here as an illustration of the legitimacy that the Greek preposition ἐν (en) can correctly convey the meaning in English of a time *after*. These three verses are not related to the resurrection story, but are presented as a point of reference for how ἐν (en) might be translated relative to the third day issue.

Luke 9:36

καὶ ἐν τῷ γενέσθαι τὴν φωνὴν εὐρέθη Ἰησοῦς μόνος· καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐσίγησαν καὶ οὐδενὶ ἀπήγγειλαν ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις οὐδὲν ὧν ἑώρακαν.

kai en to genesthai ten phōnēn eurethē tsb=o iēsous monos kai autoi esigēsan kai oudeni apēggeilan en ekeinaiis tais ēmerais ouden ōn a=eōrakan tsb=eōrakin

And **when** the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept [it] close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

Hebrews 4:11

Σπουδάσωμεν οὖν εἰσελθεῖν εἰς ἐκείνην τὴν κατάπαυσιν, ἵνα μὴ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ τις ὑποδείγματι πέση τῆς ἀπειθείας.

spoudasōmen oun eiselthein eis ekeinēn tēn katapausin ina mē en tō autō tis upodeigmati pesē tēs apetheias

Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall **after** the same example of unbelief.

1 Peter 4:13

ἀλλὰ καθὼς κοινωνεῖτε τοῖς τοῦ Χριστοῦ παθήμασιν· χαίrete, ἵνα καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀποκαλύψει τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ χαρήτε ἀγαλλιώμενοι.

alla kathōs koinōneite tois tou christou pathēmasin chairete ina kai en tē apokalupsei tēs doxēs autou charēte agalliōmenoi

But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, **when** his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

The translation of ἐν (en) into *when* in Luke 9:36 clearly equates this to an event that is in the

immediate past. It would be perfectly correct to translate this phrase to read, "And after the voice was

past...” This merely replaces the adverb *when* with the preposition *after* to convey the identical meaning.

The translation of ἐν (en) to *after* in Hebrews 4:11 demonstrates that the word *after* is an appropriate English word to represent this versatile Greek preposition. Other English prepositions could also fit comfortably in this verse, but the KJV demonstrates that *after* conveys the meaning of ἐν (en) in this verse.

The translation of ἐν (en) to *when* in 1 Peter 4:13 conveys the concept of two simultaneous events, with one beginning an instant before the other. The glory and the rejoicing occur at the same time, but the glory

is revealed before the rejoicing and actually triggers the exceeding joy. The joy, then, follows *after* the revelation of the glory. It would be correct to translate this phrase to read, “... after his glory shall be revealed, you will rejoice with great joy.”

In the story of the resurrection there are four verses where the preposition ἐν (en) appears in the Greek. In two cases, John 2:19-20, it is used in the context of a Passover prior to the Passover of Passion Week. In the other two cases, Matthew 27:40 and Mark 15:29, it is used in connection with the taunting of Jesus while He was on the cross.

At an Early Passover

The first recorded instance of Jesus making any reference to a three day time period related to His resurrection was during an exchange with the Temple leaders just after He threw out the moneychangers from the Temple for the first time. The Jewish rulers wanted Jesus to show them a sign of His authority to throw out the money changers and teach His understanding of the sacred use of the Temple. This

is the same type of request that was made after He healed the demoniac and they accused Him of casting out the Devil by Beelzebul. At that time He gave them the specific statement that He would be “three days and three nights in the heart of the Earth.” Matthew 12:40. The event in John 2 is not the same event as Matthew 12, but the sign in both cases is His time in the grave.

John 2:19

ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς·
λίσατε τὸν ναὸν τούτον, καὶ ἐν
τρισὶν ἡμέραις ἐγερῶ αὐτόν.

apekrithê ts=0 iêsous kai eipen autois
lusate ton naon touton kai **en trisin**
êmerais egerô auton

Jesus answered and said unto them,
Destroy this temple, and **in three**
days I will raise it up.

John 2:20

εἶπαν οὖν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι·
τεσσαράκοντα καὶ ἕξ ἔτεσιν
οἰκοδομήθη ὁ ναὸς οὗτος, καὶ σὸ ἐν
τρισὶν ἡμέραις ἐγερεῖς αὐτόν;

a=eipan tsb=eipon oun oi ioudaioi
a=tesseractonta tsb=tesseractonta kai ex
e t e s i n a = o i k o d o m ê t h ê
tsb=ôkodomêthê o naos outos kai su
en trisin êmerais egerais auton

Then said the Jews, Forty and six
years was this temple in building,
and wilt thou rear it up **in three**
days?

The Jews failed to immediately comprehend that

Jesus was referring to His own body as the temple which they would later seek to destroy, but which He would bring back to life. In this exchange, they repeat His exact words in questioning sarcasm. After His death they would remember that He had predicted a three day time frame for building back the temple. Both of these verses have the preposition ἐν (en), which is translated in the KJV to be *in*, but which could also correctly be translated using several other prepositions including the word *after*. Replacing the word *in* with *after* creates the phrase *after three days* in both verses, bringing them into perfect harmony with the verses where μετὰ (meta) is the preposition.

It is important to notice that Jesus makes reference

to His time in the tomb as the sign of His authority to work miracles in both the casting out of the Devil in Matthew 12 and throwing out the moneychangers in John 2. His “three days and three nights in the heart of the Earth” statement is more specific than His other statements, and it seems inconceivable that His statements regarding the time element would not all have the same meaning. It seems fitting that this earlier statement in John 2 would be less specific, but in harmony with, His later statements — especially His most explicit statement in Matthew 12:40. Since it does not violate any rule to translate His statement in John 2 with the word *after*, His statement in these texts should be translated to be *after three days*.

On the Cross

The derisive mocking of Jesus as He hung on the cross is recorded in Matthew 27:39-40 and Mark 15:29-30. The taunting by individuals in the crowd is a delayed extension of the exchange recorded in John 2:19-20, and the rebuilding of the temple relative to a

three day time period appears to have been a concept they considered as foolish. Apparently this concept was repeated in jest among the religious elite so that it was a small step for the crowd to ridicule the Son of Man whom they had nailed to the cross.

Matthew 27:40

καὶ λέγοντες· ὁ καταλύων τὸν ναὸν καὶ ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις οἰκοδομῶν, σώσον σεαυτὸν, εἰ υἱὸς εἶ τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ κατὰβηθι ἀπὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ.

kai legontes o kataluōn ton naon kai **en trisin êmerais** oikodomōn sōson seauton ei uios ei tou theou a=kai katabēthi apo tou staurou

And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest [it] **in three days**, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.

Mark 15:29

Καὶ οἱ παραπορευόμενοι ἐβλασφήμουν αὐτὸν κινούντες τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν καὶ λέγοντες· οὐὰ ὁ καταλύων τὸν ναὸν καὶ οἰκοδομῶν [ἐν] τρισὶν ἡμέραις,

kai oi paraporeuomenoi eblasphēmoun auton kinountes tas kephalas autōn kai legontes oua o kataluōn ton naon kai a=oikodomōn **[en] trisin êmerais** tsb=oikodomōn

And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest [it] **in three days**,

The prepositional phrases in these two verses are identical to those in John 2 and replacing *in* with *after* renders the phrase *after three days* in both verses, bringing them into perfect harmony with the verses in John 2, as well as those verses where *μετὰ* (meta) is the preposition. Adding these four verses to the nine verses in the section on *μετὰ* (meta) demonstrates

that, so far, 14 of the 21 passages that make reference to the resurrection relative to the third day place the resurrection clearly *after* the third day. According to these verses, the resurrection (the rebuilding of the temple) was not *in* three days, but *after* three days were complete.

διὰ = dia

The preposition *διὰ* (dia) is also quite versatile. It appears in the New Testament a total of 646 times. The word is most commonly translation as *by* (241 times), but is also translated as *through* (88 times), *with* (16 times), *for* (58 times), *for ... sake* (47 times), *therefore* (44 times), *because* (52 times), *for this cause* (14 times), and miscellaneous words 86 times. Among the miscellaneous words it is translated as *in* (9 times), *after* (3 times), *at* (3 times) and one time each as *among*, *of*, and *within*. It is interesting to notice that *in* is a fairly rare choice for this word and the only time it is translated as *within* in the KJV is in the context of the resurrection story.

after are not related to the resurrection story, but are presented here as a illustrations of the legitimacy that the Greek preposition *διὰ* (dia) has been used to convey the meaning in English of a time elapsed or a time *after* some other event. These three verses are presented as a point of reference for how *διὰ* (dia) might be translated relative to the third day issue in the resurrection story and how it has a parallel meaning with *μετὰ* (meta).

The three verses where *διὰ* (dia) is translated as

It should be noticed that *διὰ* (dia) is usually written as *δι'* (di) before a word that begins with a vowel, which is the reason for the variance in spelling in these three sample verses. The words *διὰ* and *δι'* are the same word.

Mark 2:1

Καὶ εἰσελθὼν πάλιν εἰς Καφαρναοὺμ δι' ἡμερῶν ἠκούσθη ὅτι ἐν οἴκῳ ἐστίν.

kai a=eiselthōn ats=palin tsb=eisēlthen b=palin eis a=kapharnaoum tsb=kapernaoum **di** êmerōn tsb=kai êkousthē oti a=en tsb=eis a=oikō tsb=oikon estin

And again he entered into Capernaum **after** [some] days; and it was noised that he was in the house.

Acts 24:17

δι' ἐτῶν δὲ πλειόνων ἐλεημοσύνας ποιήσων εἰς τὸ ἔθνος μου παρεγενόμην καὶ προσφοράς, **di** etōn de pleionōn tsb=paregenomēn eleēmosunas poiēsōn eis to ethnos mou a=paregenomēn kai prosphoras Now **after** many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings.

Galatians 2:1

Ἐπειτα διὰ δεκατεσσάρων ἐτῶν πάλιν ἀνέβην εἰς Ἱερουσόλυμα μετὰ βαρναβᾶ, συμπαραλαβὼν καὶ Τίτον. epeita **dia** dekatessarōn etōn palin anebēn eis ierosoluma meta barnaba sumparalabōn kai titon Then fourteen years **after** I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with [me] also.

In all three verses the word *after* is related to a period of time following days or years which clearly makes *after* an appropriate meaning for διὰ (dia). (One can also see μετὰ (meta) used in the genitive case in Galatians 2:1 where Barnabas is with Paul as they travel together to Jerusalem. In this verse μετὰ (meta) means *with* and does not mean *after*.)

In the story of the crucifixion and resurrection there are two verses where the preposition διὰ (dia) shows up in the Greek. In both places, Matthew 26:61 and Mark 14:58, certain individuals come before the Sanhedrin at the trial to accuse Jesus of having said that He would destroy the Temple and build it back relative to a three day time period.

Accusations At the Trial

When Jesus was arrested and brought before the Sanhedrin, the religious leaders had a hard time figuring out what charges to bring against Him that would make sense to the Roman governor that Jesus had committed a crime so egregious that He should die. Many false witnesses came to accuse Him, but none of their allegations were acceptable to the rulers. Finally two came forward to remind the tribunal that Jesus had said that He had power to destroy God's temple and build it again relative to a three day time frame. At that, the high priest stood up and asked Jesus what He had to say about the evidence brought

against Him, but Jesus was silent. The high priest charged Him as an oath to the Living God to declare whether He was the Anointed, the Son of God. Jesus replied that they would shortly see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Almighty coming upon the clouds of heaven. The high priest then led the other rulers in claiming that Jesus had blasphemed and that there was no further need of witnesses.

The three day claim Jesus made regarding His resurrection was the critical piece of evidence the Sanhedrin relied on as the basis for their charges to convict Him.

Matthew 26:61

εἶπαν· οὗτος ἐφη· δύναμαι καταλῦσαι τὸν ναὸν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ διὰ τριῶν ἡμερῶν οἰκοδομήσαι. tsb=pseudomartures a=eipan And said, This [fellow] said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it **in three days**. tsb=eipon outos ephē dunamai katalusai ton naon tou theou kai **dia triōn êmerōn** oik

Mark 14:58

ὅτι ἡμεῖς ἠκούσαμεν αὐτοῦ λέγοντος ὅτι ἐγὼ καταλύσω τὸν ναὸν τούτου τὸν χειροποίητον καὶ διὰ τριῶν ἡμερῶν ἄλλον ἀχειροποίητον οἰκοδομήσω. oti êmeis êkousamen autou legontos oti egō katalusō ton naon touton ton cheiropoiēton kai **dia triōn êmerōn** allon acheiropoiēton oikodomēsō We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and **within three days** I will build another made without hands.

The charges brought against Jesus — that He had said He would raise up the temple of God three days after it was destroyed — had a basis in fact. He had stated on several occasions that three days would somehow be involved between His death and resurrection. When considering that διὰ (dia) can convey the meaning of *after*, its easy to see that these

phrases in both verses above should be translated as *after three days*. The phrase *in three days* could be taken to mean that three days would be required for the activity of the building process so that the building in not complete before three days is over. But the phrase *within three days* can only mean that the rebuilding would be complete before the third day

ended. This rendering places these verses at odds with all the other verses already examined. Translating these phrases as *after three days* places them in harmony with the prior passages where the three day time factor is part of the text.

The one concept that all three of these Greek prepositions have in common is that they portray an event that occurs *after* a three day time period.

Adding these two verses to the other verses previously discussed demonstrates that, so far, 16 of the 21 passages that make reference to the three day issue place the resurrection clearly *after* the third day. According to these verses, the resurrection of Jesus (the rebuilding of the temple) was not *in* three days or even *within* three days, but *after* three days were complete.

ἕως = eôs

The word ἕως (eôs) was originally used as a conjunction to convey a temporary terminal point in time and later got the force of a preposition. It appears 148 times in scripture and is translated as *till* (28 times), *unto* (27 times), *until* (25 times), *to* (16 times), *while* (7 times), and miscellaneous words 34 times. The word conveys the meaning of an ongoing event *till* a certain point in time, but can also represent two ongoing events through a certain point in time or

as long as, or while, they both last. The concept of *till* also conveys the meaning of *the time when*. In the New Testament it only appears in the present tense.

The following texts are presented as examples of verses where ἕως (eôs) is translated to convey the ongoing events while they both last. These three verses are not related to the resurrection story, but are presented as a point of reference for how ἕως (eôs) might be translated relative to the third day issue.

Matthew 26:36

Τότε ἔρχεται μετ' αὐτῶν ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς χωρίον λεγόμενον Γεθσημανί, καὶ λέγει τοῖς μαθηταῖς· καθίσατε αὐτοῦ ἕως οὗ ἀπελθῶν ἐκεῖ προσεύξωμαι.

tote erchetai met autôn o iêsous eis chôrion legomenon a=gethsêmani tsb=gethsêmanê kai legei tois mathêtais kathisate autou eôs a=[ou] tsb=**ou apelhôn** tsb=proseuxômai ekei a=**proseuxômai**

Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, **while I go and pray** yonder.

Mark 14:32

Καὶ ἔρχονται εἰς χωρίον οὗ τὸ ὄνομα Γεθσημανί καὶ λέγει τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ καθίσατε ὧδε ἕως προσεύξωμαι.

kai erchontai eis chôrion ou to onoma a=gethsêmani tsb=gethsêmanê kai legei tois mathêtais autou kathisate ôde **eôs proseuxômai**

And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, **while I shall pray**.

John 9:4

ἡμᾶς δεῖ ἐργάζεσθαι τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πέμψαντός με ἕως ἡμέρα ἐστίν· ἔρχεται νῦν ὅτε οὐδεὶς δύναται ἐργάζεσθαι.

a=êmas tsb=eme dei ergazesthai ta erga tou pempantos me **eôs êmera estin** erchetai nux ote oudeis dunatai ergazesthai

I must work the works of him that sent me, **while it is day**: the night cometh, when no man can work.

In all three verses the word *while* conveys the concept of two simultaneous events. In Matthew 26:36 and Mark 14:32, Jesus told the 11 disciples to sit at a certain place in Gethsemane while He went to pray some distance away. His request for them to wait would include the entire time He would be in prayer, not just until He began His prayer or for a significant part of the time He would be praying. The text makes it clear that the expectation of Jesus was that they would pray while He was praying. When He came and found them sleeping, He observed that they were not able to watch with Him for a single hour.

Surely this helps us understand that the use of ἕως (eôs) in these verses includes the duration of the event.

The same logic is obvious in John 9:4. To work while it is day because the night is coming does not mean to work for just a short part of the day, but to take full use of the entire day. This use of ἕως (eôs) conveys the meaning of working for the entire day.

These examples provide ample evidence that it is appropriate to translate ἕως (eôs) into a phrase that includes the duration of time for an event.

The Day After the Crucifixion

This word shows up just one time in the story of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. It is part of the conversation the religious leaders had with Pilate the day after the burial when they asked for soldiers to be assigned to the grave site. The KJV translates ἕως (eôs) to convey a time up to the third day, but not necessarily including the third day. They could have translated it to convey a meaning that the soldiers would be expected to stay at the tomb for the duration of the third day. In practical terms, it makes no sense that the soldiers would be assigned for a time to cover only a portion of the third day when the religious leaders themselves had just told Pilate that they remembered Jesus making the claim that He would rise again *after* the third day (v. 63). The language of the text certainly implies that they believe Jesus will not rise *on* the third day, but *after* that time. But to

get the soldiers assigned to the tomb for the entire time, they implicate the disciples as being ready to steal His body. The context is certain that the priests and rulers wanted the soldiers at the grave for the duration of the three days, perhaps even through the third day from the point of this conversation. Remembering that this conversation took place sometime during the day after Jesus was buried, assigning the soldiers to the tomb through the third day from the point of this conversation would require them to be there through the fourth day from His death, which would completely cover the time Jesus cited in Matthew 12:40 and other places as the time for his resurrection. It also means that the religious leaders were requesting that the soldiers be stationed at the tomb for a full day after the three days they remember Jesus spoke of in the prior verse.

Matthew 27:64

κέλευσον οὖν ἀσφαλισθῆναι τὸν τάφον ἕως τῆς τρίτης ἡμέρας, μήποτε ἐλθόντες οἱ μαθηταὶ κλέψωσιν αὐτὸν καὶ εἰπῶσιν τῷ λαῷ ἡγέρθη ἀπὸ τῶν νεκρῶν, καὶ ἔσται ἡ ἐσχάτη πλάνη χειρῶν τῆς πρώτης.

keleuson oun asphalisthênai ton taphon eôs tês tritês êmeras mêpote elthontes oi mathêtai autou tsb=nuktos klepsôsin auton kai eipôsin tô laô êgerthê apo tôn nekrôn kai estai ê eschatê planê cheirôn tês prôtês

Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure **until the third day**, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.

Even without the sample verses of how ἕως (eôs)

is used to mean the duration of an event, it is obvious that this verse must include the entire three days and not end before the third day ends. Consequently, this phrase should be translated *through the third day* or

past the third day.

Adding this verse to the other verses previously discussed demonstrates that, so far, 17 of the 21 passages that make reference to the three day issue place the resurrection clearly *after* the third day.

τρίτην ταύτην ἡμέραν ἄγει ἀφ' οὗ = **tritên tautên êmeran agei aph ou**

The phrase τρίτην ταύτην ἡμέραν ἄγει ἀφ' οὗ (tritên tautên êmeran agei aph ou) is found only in Luke 24:21 in the story of the conversation Jesus had with Cleopas and his friend on the walk to Emmaus. There are two issues involved with this phrase. The first issue is with the word ἡμέραν (êmeran). The form of this word is in the future aorist tense, which means that the phrase τρίτην ταύτην ἡμέραν (tritên tautên êmeran) can correctly be translated to read either *after the third day* or *on the third day*. By itself it is not clear which is the intended meaning.

and is translated as *bring, lead, go, bring forth*, and miscellaneous words 6 times. It is translated as *is* in the phrase in the KJV *today is the third day* in the story. However, in the context of time, it also conveys the meaning of *to pass* a day, *keep* or *celebrate* a feast. *To pass* a day has the meaning of *to spend* a day at rest or engaged in some activity.

The second issue involves three other words that combine to assist in creating the meaning of the time element in the story of the walk to Emmaus. The first word is ἄγει (agei); it appears 72 times in scripture

The word ἀφ' (aph) (root is ἀπὸ (apo)) appears 671 times in scripture and is translated as *from, of, out of, for, off, by, at, in, since, on*, and miscellaneous words 31 times. It is left untranslated in 16 instances. It is generally used to signify separation of location, time, or origin. The meaning that is closest to the time context for the walk to Emmaus is the separation of time from the crucifixion to this conversation, that

there is a separation away from the point of origin to the present point.

The word οὗ (ou) (root is ὅς, ἧ, ὅ (hos, hē, ho)) is a demonstrative or relative pronoun such as *which, whom, that, who, whose, what, and whereof*. The words ἄφ' οὗ are used together to indicate a time after the completion of some event such as the parable in Luke 13:7 of the fig tree that did not bear fruit for three years which is translated in the KJV as *Behold, these* [three years]. This indicates that the owner came after the completion of the growing season that third year and condemned the fig tree for non-production of fruit. While the word *after* does not

appear in the text, the owner could not make this statement unless he had arrived after the third growing season and found that the fig tree had produced no fruit.

These three words taken together, ἄγει ἀφ' οὗ (agei aph ou), mean that the events of the crucifixion are separated from the present by the passing of three days, and the walk to Emmaus occurs after the elapse of the three days is complete. Because three days have already passed, it is now into the fourth day since the day of the crucifixion. While the tomb has been found empty and some women claim to have seen Him, Jesus has not been found by the disciples.

On the Road to Emmaus

The conversation Jesus had with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus is recorded only in Luke 24:13-49. These two disciples, not members of the twelve closest to Jesus, sadly discussed the events of the past few days with which they were completely familiar. They were discouraged because they were expecting that Jesus would deliver Israel, but the chief priests and leaders gave Him over to be crucified. Some women had gone to the tomb at the beginning of the new week and, finding it empty, went to tell the disciples, including these two disciples, that they had seen a vision of angels at the tomb who said He is alive. Some of their group went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not find Jesus. Now, without physical evidence that Jesus was alive, they were dejectedly walking home.

At this point Jesus, who had joined them without letting them know it was He, began to explain to them all the scriptures that told about the purpose of the Anointed One and that it was prophesied that He would be sacrificed and resurrected. Jesus was engaging their minds to review the evidence given by God through His prophets about Himself. He did not ask them to take His point of view on the authority of

His personal testimony, but recited the scriptures as evidence that He had fulfilled the prophecies just as the prophets had foretold them. His authority as God was revealed just like always when He made predictions and those predictions came to pass exactly as He had said; not *almost* as He had said, but *exactly* as He had said. His predictions regarding these time issues are not conditional. To explain any of these predictions in a manner different from the words of Jesus interferes with our understanding of His authority.

Their hearts were revived with joy as they began to understand that the events of the past few days had unfolded just as the prophets had said they would. As they saw Jesus break the bread for their meal, their eyes were opened, they recognized Him, and He vanished. They raced back to Jerusalem to tell the remaining ten disciples and their friends who were gathered together what they had just experienced. While they were sharing their experiences, Jesus appeared among them, asked why they doubted, showed them His hands and feet, and asked for something to eat.

Luke 24:21

ἡμεῖς δὲ ἠλπίζομεν ὅτι αὐτός ἐστιν ὁ μέλλων λυτροῦσθαι τὸν Ἰσραήλ· ἀλλὰ γε καὶ σὺν πᾶσιν τούτοις τρίτην ταύτην ἡμέραν ἄγει ἀφ' οὗ ταῦτα ἐγένετο.

ēmeis de ēlpizomen oti autos estin o mellōn lutrousthai ton israēl alla ge a=kai sun pasin **toutois tritēn tautēn ēmeran agei** tsb=sēmeron **aph ou** tauta egeneto

But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, **to day is the third day since** these things were done.

The meaning closest to the time frame for the word ἄγει (agei) is not that this is the third day since these things happened, but that three days have passed

or been spent since these things happened. This is significant in that it tells us when the counting of the three days should begin and end. If “this is the third

day since these things were done” and this is the first day of the week as stated in Luke 24:1, then today (the first day of the week) is the third day, yesterday (the seventh day of the week, the weekly Sabbath) was the second day in the sequence, and Friday was the first day in the sequence. However, if “three days have passed since all these things were done” and this is the first day of the week as stated in Luke 24:1, then yesterday (the seventh day of the week, the weekly Sabbath) was the third day in the sequence, Friday was the second day in the sequence, and Thursday was the first day in the sequence. This latter understanding is supported by the definition of σήμερον (sēmeron) in Luke 24:21 to mean the day either current or just passed, and matches the words of Jesus in Matthew 12:40 that He would be in the heart of the Earth for three full days and three full nights.

The word σήμερον (sēmeron) does not appear in the Nestle-Aland text, but is in the Textus Receptus from which the KJV was translated. Strong's Dictionary identifies that σήμερον (sēmeron) is presumed to be the compound of the article η / με / ρα (the) (ἡμέραν) which means this day or night current or just past. The primary meaning is related to “the day, used of the natural day, or the interval between sunrise and sunset, as distinguished from and contrasted with the night.”

The events under discussion in Luke 24:21— the

arrest, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus — were not completed on this day, but were completed in the recent past. A careful reading of Luke 24 shows that the disciples on the road to Emmaus understood that three days had passed since the crucifixion took place. Luke 24:22-23 makes it clear that they know about the resurrection, but they place the resurrection after the reference to the “three days”. Thus, the words ἄγει σήμερον (agei sēmeron) in the Textus Receptus taken together must mean that the time factor under discussion has definitely been just recently completed with three days separating the events.

While most translations of this passage render it according to the traditional teaching, at least three translations have expressed the view that three days have already passed at the time Jesus meets the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. The translation of the Modern Language Bible / New Berkeley Version (MLB/NBV) edited by Gerrit Verkuyl, the translation by James Murdoch from the Syriac Peshito Version, and the translation by J.W. Ethridge from the Peshito in use among the Oriental Christians from the earliest times all render this verse to mean that there were three intervening days between the events of the crucifixion and the walk to Emmaus. Notice how they have written it. In all cases the brackets or parenthesis are in the original.

Moreover, three days have already passed since all those events occurred. . . MLB/NBV

And lo, three days [have passed], since all these things occurred. . . . James Murdoch

...and, lo, three days (have passed) since all these things were done. . . . J.W. Ethridge

Back in Jerusalem

After Jesus demonstrated to those gathered that He was not a ghost, He explained to them from the writings of Moses, the Prophets, and Psalms that these things must take place. Now those who were in Jerusalem heard the explanation He had earlier given

the two disciples while on the road to Emmaus, and those two got to hear it for a second time. He opened their minds to understand the scriptures that the Anointed One had to suffer and would rise from the dead.

Luke 24:46

καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὅτι οὕτως γέγραπται παθεῖν τὸν χριστὸν καὶ ἀναστῆναι ἐκ νεκρῶν τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ,	kai eipen autois oti outos gegraptoi tsb=kai tsb=outos tsb=edei pathein ton christon kai anastēnai ek nekrōn tē tritē êmera	And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:
---	---	---

Just as He had done before His crucifixion, Jesus again connects the third day to His resurrection. As in his previous reporting of these events, Luke does not include a preposition to specify the relationship

between the resurrection and the third day, but it would only be logical that it has the same relationship in this verse as it had in the earlier passages. The prepositions μετὰ (meta), ἐν (en), and διὰ (dia) all

have in common the concept of a time *after* an event, and that must be the meaning of the relationship of the third day to the resurrection in this verse. There is no other way to coordinate these verses with the earlier passages than to understand them to mean that

Jesus would rise from the dead after the third day.

Adding this verse to the other verses previously discussed demonstrates that 19 of the 21 passages that make reference to the three day issue place the resurrection *after* the third day.

Two Without

There are two passages that have no special words in the Greek to specify the length of time Jesus was in the grave and no direct companion passage in another part of scripture to provide the context of the relationship between the crucifixion of Jesus and the

resurrection. These verses are certainly in harmony with the other texts and the larger picture that Jesus was raised from the dead after the completion of three days and three nights, but they lack the specificity and direct links with other scripture for that purpose.

Peter's Testimony

Several years after the resurrection, while Peter was the guest of Simon the tanner in Joppa, Peter was given the visions of the wild animals let down from heaven in a sheet and the command to rise, kill, and eat. Peter protested that he had never eaten anything unclean. But the voice of the Lord told him that what God had purified he must not consider unclean. Immediately the sheet was taken up into heaven.

While Peter was contemplating this, three servants of Cornelius, the Italian Cohort, stood at the gate calling out for him. The Spirit told Peter to go with these men without hesitation to the home of Cornelius where he was asked to teach them everything that the Lord had instructed his disciples. Part of Peter's teaching includes the comment that God had raised Jesus from the dead the third day.

Acts 10:40

<p>τοῦτον ὁ θεὸς ἤγειρεν ἐν τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτὸν ἐμφανῆ γενέσθαι,</p>	<p>touton o theos êgeiren a=[en] tē tritē êmera kai edōken auton emphanê genesthai</p>	<p>Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly;</p>
--	--	---

The language in Peter's statement in this verse is exactly the same as the words of Matthew 16:21, 17:23, 20:19, Luke 9:22, 24:7, and 24:46. All of these verses are tied to other verses by Matthew, Mark, and Luke that positively state that Jesus was resurrected after three days or that three days had elapsed between the crucifixion and the resurrection. While these verses are not directly tied to the record of this statement by Peter, it is certainly in harmony with them. Moreover, many scholars believe that the Mark, whose name is carried on the second gospel, got his information primarily from Peter so that Mark's gospel is essentially Peter's gospel. If Mark's gospel is actually Peter's gospel, then it must be noticed that Mark is the author who specifies that Jesus would rise *after* (μετὰ (meta)) three days on those three occasions when Jesus told the disciples that he would die and rise again. If Mark got his information from Peter, then Peter must have made his statement here in the same time frame as his earlier statements to Mark, and this passage must be

understood to mean that Jesus was raised up after the third day.

It is interesting to notice that the authors of the Greek versions of this text have inserted the preposition [ἐν] [en] as the preposition for this phrase, but did not carry that over into the English. It should be noticed that Greek prepositional phrases are sometimes written without the actual preposition. In such a case the preposition is presumed from the context. In a discussion on the role of prepositions, J.W. Wenham in *The Elements of New Testament Greek*, states on page 64:

Prepositions do not, strictly speaking, 'govern' the cases of the nouns which they precede. The case is really the governing element in the expression; the preposition only serves to make clear the exact sense in which the case is used. This, at least, was true in the earlier history of the language, but as the language developed the prepositions mastered the cases.

He then illustrates the ways of expressing time in the accusative, genitive, and dative cases. Most important to our understanding of Acts 10:40 is his illustration of the dative case. He writes on page 65:

(3) The *dative* represents a *place* or *point* in time (a locative use). Therefore **time at which is dative**,

e.g. τη τρίτη ἡμέρα on the third day

None of these uses requires a preposition, though a preposition may on occasions be added as well, e.g. 'On the third day' could be translated ἐν τη τρίτη ἡμέρα.

What J.W. Wenham is illustrating is that the preposition is *presumed* from the context. In all six instances in scripture that have this exact word order, the preposition is unstated in the text and must be presumed from the context; but the context must also be determined by comparing these verses with the more specific texts in Mark where the Greek explicitly states that Jesus would rise *after* (μετὰ (meta)) the

third day. Instead of the presumption being that Jesus would rise 'on the third day' as tradition teaches, it should be understood that He would rise 'after the third day.' There is no reason to believe that the context of the six verses where no preposition is stated is any different from those passages where the preposition is explicitly stated to be *after* (μετὰ (meta)). Consequently, the passages where the preposition is explicitly stated to be *after* must be viewed as the correct meaning of the story.

In English prepositions are never presumed. This part of speech is important in determining the nature of the action expressed by the prepositional phrase. A phrase can take on a significantly different meaning by changing the preposition that begins the phrase. *On the third day* and *after the third day* convey very different meanings and all the verses where the phrase appears in the Greek should be translated to be consistent with the most specific texts. Because the preposition is absent in those six verses, not a single one of those verses can be used to argue that Jesus would be resurrected *on* the third day.

Paul's Testimony

Many years after the resurrection Paul presents his gospel to the church at Corinth and describes the central role of the resurrection in the gospel and his own role in telling the story. Because Christ rose,

believers will rise again. This is the heart of the good news that Jesus died for our sins and was resurrected in accordance with the scriptures. Those who are saved will hold to the message of scripture.

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

³ παρέδωκα γὰρ ὑμῖν ἐν πρώτοις, ὃ καὶ παρέλαβον, ὅτι Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν κατὰ τὰς γραφάς, ⁴ καὶ ὅτι ἐτάφη, καὶ ὅτι ἐγήγερται τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ κατὰ τὰς γραφάς,

³ paredōka gar umin en prōtois o kai parelabon oti christos apethanen uper tōn amartiōn hēmōn kata tas graphas ⁴ kai oti etaphē kai oti egēgertai tē tsb=**tritē êmera** a=tē a=tritē kata tas graphas

³ For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; ⁴ And that he was buried, and that he rose again **the third day** according to the scriptures:

The language in Paul's statement in this passage is exactly the same as the words of Luke 18:33 (although the Greek transliterated doesn't quite show it), which was the third time Jesus told His disciples of His death and resurrection. Luke 18:33 is parallel to the record of Mark 10:34, which has the word μετὰ (meta), the Greek word for *after*, but which is not translated into the English. Mark 10:34 reflects the same language as the first and second times Jesus told the disciples of His death and resurrection, and by extension, would naturally include the words of Paul in this text.

Paul makes reference to the events of the death and resurrection of Jesus according to the scriptures. The scriptures Paul is referring to are the Hebrew scriptures or the Old Testament since much of the New Testament had not yet been written. When Jesus met the disciples on the road to Emmaus, He reviewed for them all the scriptures that foretold His death and resurrection. Again when He appeared among them in Jerusalem later that day He reviewed all the scriptures that applied to Him beginning with Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms. Paul's language is a reflection of the record of Luke 24, which

expresses the concept that the death and resurrection are separated by three full days. Thus, Paul's statement to the church at Corinth is tied to the other

passages in two ways and is in harmony with the understanding that Jesus was raised from death after three days.

Pay Attention to This

In the midst of all His teaching and miracles, the record shows that Jesus took the opportunity to emphasize to His disciples the importance of the events that would be associated with not just His death, but also His resurrection. At the end of the story of the transfiguration in Luke 9:28-36, Jesus instructed Peter, James, and John to keep that experience private until after His resurrection. The day after they came down from the mountain, a crowd of local people met them and a man whose son was demon possessed shouted for Jesus to heal his son and command that the demon leave him. Jesus cured the young man and the people were overwhelmed at the majesty of God. Luke 9:37-42.

But Jesus knew that He was headed for the cross, an experience that would be very difficult both for Himself and for His disciples, and He urgently wanted to prepare them for it. As the crowd was glowing in the power of Jesus, Luke 9:43^b-45 states:

While everyone was wondering at everything He was doing, He said to His disciples, "Let these teachings sink into your ear; for the Son of man is to be delivered into human hands." However, they did not understand this saying; it was kept hidden from them so that they might not grasp it, and they were afraid to question Him about this saying.

Jesus wanted to emphasize to his disciples that some important issues, in fact, the most important issues both He and they would face, could not be resolved by miracles. He warns them ahead of time that what He is about to tell them is of utmost importance. This is the second time He tells the entire group of disciples about these momentous events about to unfold. Telling them twice fulfills the biblical principle that something given twice is confirmation of its accuracy. He will tell the entire group a third time as they are on their way up to Jerusalem for the final Passover.

The phrase "Let these teachings sink into your ear" is a Hebrew idiom that means "don't forget what I'm about to tell you because it is very important."

David Bivin and Roy Blizzard, Jr., in their book *Understanding the Difficult Words of Jesus* provide the following explanation of this phrase on pages 119-120:

Luke 9:44: "*Lay these sayings in your ears.*"

The above translation of these words of Jesus is so "un-English" that it is almost a joke. The King James translators, as usual, have done nothing more than translate the Greek text word for word into English. It is unfair, though, to be too harsh in our criticism of them, since "dynamic" translation, that is, attempting to give the sense of the original rather than a word-for-word translation, is really only a phenomenon of the twentieth century. When the Greek translator of the original *Life of Jesus* translated the above Hebrew expression word for word into Greek, he was employing the traditional method of translation. Almost 1600 years later, the translators commissioned by King James, still using the word-for-word method, translated that same expression from Greek into English; and thus it was that a beautiful Hebrew idiom was perpetuated in our English Gospels.

This idiom, "lay (or put) in the ears of," is found only one time in the Old Testament — in Exodus 17:14. After Israel's battle with Amalek at Rephidim (Exodus 17:8-13), Moses was commanded by God to record in writing a very important promise: "I will thoroughly erase every trace of the people of Amalek." This promise was so important that God wanted it documented, written down. He wanted to be absolutely sure it would be remembered. "Write this in a scroll as a *remembrance*" is what the text literally says. But not only did God command Moses to record the promise in writing, he also commanded Moses to *put it in the ears of* (i.e., "announce it to") Joshua. "Put in the ears of" implies more than just "reading" or "repeating" in the hearing of Joshua. Undoubtedly, this idiom also carries the added emphasis: "Listen carefully and remember well, for what you are about to hear is very important."

This sounds a lot like some other places in

scripture where God's people were told to remember something very important. The Sabbath command spoken at Mt. Sinai begins with the words "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Exodus 20:8. When God told Moses to hew new tables of stone to replace the ones he'd broken, and bring them up Mt. Sinai so He could write again the ten words, God told Moses, "Mark well what I am commanding you today." Exodus 34:11. At the end of the book of Malachi, the last book in the Old Testament and the last book to be written before the Greeks overthrew the Persians and began to Hellenize Mesopotamia with their language, culture, and philosophy, Malachi left God's people with the words, "Remember the law of Moses." Malachi 4:4. The law of Moses contains the advice and instruction for following God's lifestyle and for following God's system of worship. It is the law of Moses that would keep His people in touch with the Living God in a world dominated by secular interests and influence. Now the LORD wants His disciples to be prepared for the biggest disappointment, as well as the most unbelievable joy of their lives.

The KJV renders the phrase in Exodus 17:14, which is an equivalent phrase to Jesus' statement in Luke 9:44, "rehearse [it] in the ears." The word *rehearse* means to recite something accurately until one knows it and can repeat it accurately, and it should be recited from time to time as needed or on special occasions. What was so important that Jesus wanted his disciples to pay such special attention to that they could recite it accurately? He wanted them to understand the events that were about to unfold regarding the fulfillment of the prophecies of His death, resurrection, and the time interval between them. If we reconstruct His prophecy regarding His death and resurrection from a composite of the statements recorded in scripture, we get something like the following statement:

Listen, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that has been written by the Prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled: He will suffer and be rejected by the elders, the high priests and scribes, and be handed over to Gentiles; he will be killed and spend three days and three nights in the heart of the Earth, but he will come to life again after three days.

In this composite statement, Jesus reveals that the

religious leaders at His Father's Temple will be successful in spiritually and physically abusing Him. The very ones who should be responsible for shepherding the LORD's flock (Ezekiel 34) are the one's who will turn Him over to the Gentiles who will torture Him and give Him a shameful death. Moreover, all the time elements from His death through His resurrection are expressed. It was Jesus' hope that as the events of His trial came about and the gruesome treatment from the Romans was inflicted on Him, they would remember His warnings and their faith would not waiver. While they didn't understand the warnings before the events took place, they remembered His words after the resurrection.

Importance to Satan

If the disciples heard Jesus say that it was especially important for them to understand these things, did Satan not hear and understand this also? Was Satan not the active unseen agent engineering events to accomplish the death of Jesus? Ultimately, Satan's plan was a failure because Jesus rose triumphant just as on so many occasions He said He would. After the triumphal resurrection, how important was it for Satan to engineer a distortion of the record of these landmark events? Satan's entire campaign against Jesus and the Father would now shift to misrepresent the historical events, to distort the record to bring about great deception, to bring false reasoning to bear on as many aspects of the story as possible, and to subtly subvert the purpose of the LORD.

Why has there been so much reliance on the traditional belief that Jesus was resurrected *in* three days or *on* the third day, rather than *after* three days? Why did the translators of the KJV apparently mishandle the word $\mu\epsilon\tau\grave{\alpha}$ (meta) in Mark 9:31 and 10:34? It was prophesied in Daniel 7:25 that the Little Horn would think to change times and laws. Translating $\epsilon\nu$ (en) and $\delta\iota\grave{\alpha}$ (dia) inconsistently from $\mu\epsilon\tau\grave{\alpha}$ (meta) has allowed an understanding to be accepted and established among those who consider themselves to be followers of Jesus in the Good Friday crucifixion and Easter Sunday morning resurrection.

The translation issue is subtle because $\epsilon\nu$ (en) and $\delta\iota\grave{\alpha}$ (dia) can, in the right context, mean *in*. But that translation in the context of the story of Passion Week creates significant conflict. Historically the only resurrection that took place on Easter Sunday morning

was the annual mythical resurrection of Tammuz as part of the pagan fertility religion of Ashtoreth celebrated with Easter lilies, Easter eggs, and Easter bunnies for 500 years before Jesus was born in

Bethlehem. The Little Horn has been very successful in distorting the record, subverting the message of Jesus, and changing the thinking of most of those who call themselves followers of Christ.

Conclusion

This exhaustive review of the Greek prepositions in the story of Passion Week demonstrates that all of scripture is in agreement on the issue of when Jesus was resurrected and the length of time He was in the tomb. This review of these 21 passages where the crucifixion and resurrection are tied to each other by the concept of three days shows that every single case is tied to the meaning that the resurrection occurred after three days had passed since the crucifixion. The three Greek prepositions *μετά* (meta), *ἐν* (en), and *διὰ* (dia) all have in common the meaning of an event that happened *after* some other event. The conjunctive word *ἕως* (eōs) was shown to convey the meaning of *through the duration* of two concurrent events. The tense of the word *ἐμεραν* in the phrase *τρίτην ταύτην ἡμέραν* (tritên tautên êmeran) can mean *after the third day* and the words *ἄγει ἀφ' οὗ* (agei aph ou) was shown to mean that three days separated the events of the crucifixion from the resurrection. Not a single verse in the Greek mandates that Jesus was resurrected *on* the third day nor *in* three days.

Μετὰ (meta) conveys the most specific relationship of the time between the crucifixion and the resurrection. Good detective work never discards the most specific information in favor of general information, but evaluates the general information in light of that which is more specific. The more general prepositions of *ἐν* (en) and *διὰ* (dia) are viewed in light of the more specific preposition *μετὰ* (meta). While it is possible to examine any of the passages where *ἐν* (en) or *διὰ* (dia) is the preposition out of context from all the other passages and reach the traditional conclusion, it is not possible to support the traditional conclusion when an individual passage is placed in the context of the whole.

The Jewish leaders themselves testified to Pilate that Jesus said He would be resurrected after three days. Matthew represents their request to Pilate as if they are quoting Jesus. Their request shows that the enemies of Jesus understood Him to have said that He would be raised from the dead after three days. The Greek preposition *μετὰ* (meta) is used a total of four

times by Matthew and Mark, which means there are at least two gospel writer witnesses who use the preposition with the greatest specificity that the resurrection was after the third day.

At the request of the Jewish leaders, Pilate had authorized that 100 Roman soldiers be stationed around the burial site to ensure that the disciples wouldn't steal His body away and claim that He had risen just as He had predicted. Roman soldiers were expected to forfeit their lives when they did not complete their assignment. They were stationed at the tomb for three days and could verify that Jesus was in the tomb for that length of time. Only after the three days were the soldiers overcome by the angels. After the resurrection when the soldiers went scampering to tell Pilate that they had been overpowered by the angels, they were intercepted by the Jewish rulers, and bribed and compromised into silence. The intention of the rulers was that the resurrection story would never be told. Despite their intentions and the bribes, the story of the Roman soldiers has been told. Not only could the soldiers testify of the three days in the tomb, they could also testify to the power of the resurrection.

Hearing the story of the resurrection in its entire context helps to confirm that all the events foretold by Jesus have come true exactly as He said they would. Every passage is in harmony with the sign of the prophet Jonah that Jesus would be three days and three nights in the heart of the Earth. No man-made theories need to be employed to explain away any aspect of the story. No violence or damage is done to any scripture by the explanation presented here as every verse is explained according to the way it is actually written.

By setting the record straight, the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus can be restored to its rightful place as part of the celebration of Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and the Day of First Fruits, which the LORD said His people are to keep forever. The restoration of the LORD's plan of celebration and worship will be one step closer to reality.